

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR PINT PDEV AV SC UK

SUBJ: INDEPENDENCE FOR ST. KITTS

REF: BTN 0761

1. DURING RECENT DISCUSSION WITH ME, AT WHICH POLOFF ALSO PRESENT, PREMIER ROBERT BRADSHAW OF ST. KITTS-NEVIS-ANGUILLA SAID INDEPENDENCE FOR HIS STATE IS A LONG WAY OFF. AN ARDENT BELIEVER IN THE POLITICAL INTEGRATION OF THE VARIOUS SMALL EASTERN CARIBBEAN ISLAND STATES, BRADSHAW SAID HIS GOVERNMENT IS NOT CONCERNED WITH INDEPENDENCE AT THE MOMENT BUT IS TRYING TO IMPROVE THE STATE'S ECONOMIC POSITION BY DEVELOPING AGRICULTURE AND TOURISM. AS SEPARATE INDEPENDENT ENTITIES, NONE OF THE FIVE ASSOCIATED STATES OF ST. VINCENT, ST. LUCIA, DOMINICA, ANTIGUA, AND ST. KITTS WOULD BE ECONOMICALLY VIABLE, HE ADDED. SINGLING OUT THE NEWLY INDEPENDENT NATION OF GRENADA WHOSE PM, ERIC M. GAIRY, RECENTLY CONCEDED THAT HIS STATE IS ON THE VERGE OF ECONOMIC COLLAPSE, BRADSHAW CHARACTERIZED GRENADIAN INDEPENDENCE AS A "FARCE." ACCORDING TO BRADSHAW, GRENADA HAS ONLY THE TRAPPINGS OF POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE AND LACKS ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE. BRADSHAW ADDED THAT HE IS STILL FIRMLY COMMITTED TO REGIONAL ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL INTEGRATION AND EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT THE USG SHOULD NOT DO ANYTHING TO ENCOURAGE "FRAGMENTATION"

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OF THE ISLAND STATES IN THE EASTERN CARRIBBEAN.

2. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH BRADSHAW DID NOT SAY SO, IT IS OBVIOUS THAT ST. KITTS WILL BE THE LAST ASSOCIATED STATE TO CONSIDER INDEPENDENCE. THE STATE OF ST. KITTS-NEVIS-ANGUILLA IS DEEPLY DIVIDED, WITH GROUPS OPPOSED TO THE BRADSHAW GOVERNMENT PRE-DOMINATING IN BOTH BREAKAWAY ANGUILLA AND DISCONTENTED NEVIS. HOWEVER, BRADSHAW'S ST. KITTS-NEVIS TRADES AND LABOR UNION HAS AN ALMOST UNBREAKABLE HOLD ON THE MAIN ISLAND, REPRESENTING IN THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY ALL BUT ONE OF ST. KITTS' SEVEN CONSTITUENCIES. SINCE NEVIS IS REPRESENTED IN THE HOUSE BY ONLY TWO MEMBERS AND ANGUILLA BY ONLY ONE (GIVEN ITS PRESENT STATUS, THE SEAT, IS, IN FACT, VACANT), BRADSHAW IS CLEARLY IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT. THUS, IT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT HE WOULD BE WILLING TO CONSIDER INDEPENDENCE FOR ST. KITTS-NEVIS-ANGUILLA UNTIL AGRICULTURE AND TOURISM ARE SUFFICIENTLY DEVELOPED ON ST. KITTS TO MAKE THE STATE ECONOMICALLY VIABLE AND STRONG ENOUGH TO ENTICE ANGUILLA BACK, THOUGH THIS SITUATION COULD CHANGE IF, THROUGH HMG'S INTER-CESSION, A POLITICAL COMPROMISE WERE TO BE REACHED PROVIDING FOR ANGUILLA'S REINTEGRATION INTO THE TRIPARTITE STATE. END COMMENT. BRITTON

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